UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.241/6
23 April 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE
TO ELABORATE A CONVENTION TO COMBAT
DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES
EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR
DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA (INCD)
First Session
24 May-3 June 1993
Agenda item 3

SHARING OF TECHNICAL INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENTS

Note by the Secretariat

General Assembly resolution 47/188 (para. 11), requests the Head of the Ad Hoc Secretariat to make available to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee at the first substantive session the most relevant and recent information available on drought and desertification. The resolution also decided (para. 5), that the first week of the Committee's first substantive session be devoted to sharing technical information and assessments on drought and desertification.

The organizational session of the INCD in New York 26-29 January 1993 subsequently decided that this information sharing segment would consist of seven parts devoted to analysis of: (I) desertification, drought and the global environment, (II) causes, general extent and consequences of land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, (III) social and economic dimensions, (IV) patterns of bilateral and multilateral assistance programmes, (V) experience with international, regional, sub-regional and national programmes to combat desertification and mitigate drought in

developing countries, (VI) experiences of developed countries, and (VII) some possible elements of a new strategy to promote sustainable development in countries experiencing drought and desertification.

The Secretariat developed an outline of specific topics under the seven general headings. It then asked governments, competent international organizations or, in a few cases, a member of the International Panel of Experts on Desertification, to take the lead in presenting each specific topic. Oral presentations will be supplemented by longer written versions, in French and English, giving more details about the topic.

The purpose of this note is to fully inform governments and observers about the content of the information sharing segment so they can prepare comments and questions for the discussion period which will follow each topical presentation.

Attached is a rough schedule of the information sharing segment divided into half-day blocks. It shows in parentheses after each topic the organization or individual making the presentation on it.

Schedule of First Week of First Substantive Session of INCD

May 24

P.M. OPENING OF MEETING

I. DESERTIFICATION, DROUGHT AND THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

- Interrelationships between the global climate system, drought and desertification, including the impact of desertification on climate change and global warming (Professor Robert Balling, Arizona State University, USA)

- Desertification and desiccation as a threat to the conservation and utilization of biodiversity (Tentatively Professsor A.M. Imevbore, Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria)

- Effect of desertification and desiccation on ground and surface hydrological systems, water availability and water quality (UNESCO)

- Modern techniques for assessing the global environment, including satellite imagery, remote sensing, geographic information systems (UNEP)

May 25

A.M.

II. CAUSES, GENERAL EXTENT AND PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES OF LAND DEGRADATION IN ARID, SEMI-ARID AND DRY SUB-HUMID AREAS

- Degradation of rainfed agricultural lands, irrigated agricultural lands, ranching and traditional pastoral lands, and forest lands (FAO)

- Land degradation resulting from urbanization, industrialization, mining and tourism (HABITAT)

III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS

- Economic, social and cultural causes and consequences of drought and desertification, including linkages to poverty, population pressure, food security, international trading patterns, traditional mechanisms for coping with drought and desertification, and gender/religious aspects (IFAD)

P.M.

- Impact of economic polices, including incentives and disincentives to appropriate technologies, particularly land tenure systems and subsidies (World Bank)

- Role of planning systems and instruments, including integration of anti-desertification programmes into overall development programmes (UNSO)

IV. PATTERN OF BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

- Volume and quality of different types of financial flows and assistance programmes, including multilateral and bilateral sources, debt repayments and rescheduling, regional and functional breakdowns and the role of special funding mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility (OECD/Club du Sahel)

- Programmes of non-governmental organizations (NGOs to be decided)

May 26

A.M.

V. EXPERIENCE WITH INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL, SUBREGIONAL AND NATIONAL PROGRAMMES TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION AND MITIGATE DROUGHT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- Southern Africa (SADC)

- Sudano-Sahelian Africa (CILSS, IGADD)

- North Africa (UMA, Algeria, Tunisia)

May 26
(continued)

P.M. - Middle East (Yemen, Gulf Cooperation Council)

- South Asia (India, Pakistan)

May 27

A.M. - China

- Latin America (Chile, Brazil, Mexico)

P.M. - Central Asia (Tentatively Turkmenistan)

VI. EXPERIENCES OF DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

- Spain

- United States

- Australia

May 28

A.M. VII. SOME POSSIBLE ELEMENTS OF A NEW STRATEGY TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION

- Integrated community driven approaches: participation in decision making, freedom of information, education and awareness, role of NGOs, women and other major groups (IFAD)

- New directions in systematic information collection and analysis: national ground monitoring structures, soil surveys, revised national accounts, revised indicators, early warning systems, impact assessments, information networks (UNEP)

- Promising technologies to reverse land degradation: current trends in research, development and cooperation (World Resources Institute)

- Experimentation and innovations in capacity building (UNSO)

May 28
(continued)
P.M.

- Development of alternative livelihood systems: conservation and utilization of dryland biodiversity, processing of agricultural/pastoral products, infrastructure and other facilities to support new industries and services, migration strategies (IFAD)

- Alternative energy systems for dryland areas: agroforestry, improved stoves, solar and wind power (Tentatively Third World Environment and Development (ENDA))

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY OF INFORMATION SHARING SEGMENT